

**ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION
ASSESSMENT:**

THE RURAL CODE PROCESS IN NIGER

GreenCOM

Environmental Education and Communication Project

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ACRONYMS

AFN	Association des Femmes du Niger
AIDS	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
ASDG II	Agriculture Sector Development Grant Phase II
CECI	Centre Canadien d'Etude et de Coopération International
C/GRN	Cellule/Gestion des Ressources Naturelles
CILSS	Comité Permanent Interétats de Lutte Contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel
CNSPDE	Comité National pour la Survie, la Protection et le Développement de l'Enfant
CONGAFEN	Coordination des Organisations Non-Gouvernementales et Associations Féminines Nigériennes
DANIDA	Office of Danish Cooperation
EC	European Community
EE&C	Environmental Education and Communication
FNEN	Fédération National des Eleveurs du Niger
GON	Government of Niger
GreenCOM	Environmental Education and Communication Project
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
NCRC	National Committee for the Rural Code
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NRMA	Natural Resource Management and Agriculture

ONVPE	Organization Nigérienne des Volontaires pour la Préservation de l'Environnement
PFIE	Programme de Formation et Information pour l'Environnement
PRAM	Participatory Rural Appraisal Methods
MCH/FP	Maternal and Child Health/Family Planning
RIDD-FITILA	Réseau d'Intégration et de Diffusion du Droit en Milieu Rural
PSCR	Permanent Secretariat for the Rural Code
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
SO	Strategic Objective
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A rapid assessment was conducted to obtain information on organizations and resources for Environmental Education and Communication (EE&C), and to identify possible strategies for future EE&C initiatives in Niger. One of the main objectives was to look at a range of enabling factors that would assist in the education and communication process for Niger's Rural Code.

Meetings and interviews were held with a variety of individuals. They included representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), development projects, international donor agencies, *Nigérien* government officials, staff of USAID/Niamey, and many rural *Nigériens* affected by the Rural Code Process. The answers sought related to the existing resources and capacity for implementing EE&C, lessons learned, and possible opportunities for future EE&C activities. Special questions were posed to obtain information on gender issues. Except where the consultant was able to make a site visit, descriptions of activities are supplied by the provider and are not independently verified.

Past and present EE&C activities undertaken by the Permanent Secretariat for the Rural Code (PSRC) and National Committee for the Rural Code (NCRC) were studied examining how they were developed, implemented, and evaluated.

The major findings were as follows:

1. USAID/Niamey's Mission Strategic Objectives highlight the importance of information, education and communication in each of its three strategic objectives, including SO3 which relates to Natural Resource Management. An NRM EE&C strategy should be seen as complementary to current IEC activities in the health, finance and agriculture sectors, and can only serve to reinforce these initiatives. Efforts at coordinating IEC for USAID/Niamey should be considered. The consultancy found that capacity in environmental education in Niger is extremely weak. Intensive technical assistance is recommended to build capacity.
2. The PSRC recognizes the importance of EE&C in the Rural Code process and considers it to be of prime importance to its mandate. The PSRC, together with the NCRC, has developed and implemented several activities geared at popularizing the Rural Code. Target groups were established and popularization workshops were held around the country. The PSRC does not have the capacity to undertake baseline research, strategically implement or monitor an EE&C initiative.
3. The Rural Code process has serious implications on the lives of rural producers. Many communities, primarily nomadic communities, are negatively affected. Although many seem to be familiar with the Rural Code, few understand it or its implications completely. Many are misinformed which provides complex challenges to an EE&C initiative. The Rural Code risks being ignored or, worse, create serious conflicts between pastoralist and sedentary communities. A "straightforward" EE&C campaign may be premature. Efforts should first

be targeted to building consensus, providing a process where information from the grassroots would be brought back up to the SPCR to assist them in developing the Complementary Texts. The importance of this can not be overemphasized.

4. Many groups have been marginalized in the Rural Code process to date, primarily nomadic communities and women. Both groups are difficult to access due to lifestyle, cultural and religious constraints, lack of education and very low literacy rates. Careful attention should be placed when designing any EE&C initiative to ensure their full participation.
5. While several agencies, with the best of intentions, have clearly targeted EE&C as an institutional goal, limitations of funding, of technical capability, and of IEC core staff make it unlikely that any will establish themselves in the near future.
6. Long-term institutional support is recommended to assist in building the capacity of NGOs to implement EE&C initiatives, including EE&C for the Rural Code process. It is also recommended that a Rural Code EE&C Coordinating Committee be established to ensure that all organizations with the capacity to assist in the process be included, particularly organizations working at the grassroots level. A technical advisor could provide support to building the capacity on NGOs and Government in EE&C as well as assist in developing the capacity of a Coordinating Committee and establishing a EE&C campaign.
7. Critical to any EE&C initiatives would be the development of applied social science research capacity. Materials currently produced are not based on adequate formative research, nor are they evaluated for impact.

SECTION I GENERAL ASSESSMENT

A. Introduction

This assignment attempted to fulfill two objectives. One was to meet the needs of the USAID Africa Bureau in conducting a general Environmental Education and Communication (EE&C) needs assessment. The other was to meet the specific requirements of the USAID/Niamey Mission in the area of EE&C as it relates to the country's Rural Code process. USAID has provided assistance to the Government of Niger for the Rural Code process for several years. Under the Mission's Strategic Objective Three, the Results Package Team is responsible for working towards greater rural producer sense of land tenure security and decentralization, with a particular emphasis on public input. The consultancy was designed in consideration of this.

The following report is structured as follows. Section I provides the results of a general EE&C assessment. It lists many projects which have the capacity to implement some aspects of EE&C initiatives, and which, with assistance, have the potential to be key players in general EE&C interventions or those specific to the Rural Code. Section II provides an analysis of the Rural Code process to date and lists areas where assistance could be provided to improve the capacity of agencies and institutions involved. An overview of the status of women in Niger and implications of EE&C initiatives in relation to women are presented in Section III. An analysis of the Rural Code, including an overview of the history, constraints of the Rural Code, and recommendations is provided in Section IV. And, in Section V, existing programs and initiatives in Niger which presently support and could continue to support EE&C initiatives are examined.

B. Terms of Reference

This consultancy is part of a long-term initiative, the USAID Environmental Education and Communication (GreenCOM) Project. Its purpose is to assist the USAID Mission in Niger in examining the status of Environmental Education and Communication with regard to the Rural Code process in Niger from four broad points of view. They are as follows:

1. Enabling Conditions

- Examine a range of enabling factors that allow improved education and communication concerning the Rural Code to take place.
- Note Mission's strategic objectives, educational and communication policies in place through national environment and development plans, and the degree to which they have been operationalized.
- Examine the agencies and institutions responsible for Rural Code activities, and assess the planning and research capabilities of the agencies.

2. Interventions

- Examine the range of possible interventions. This includes looking at the formal systems (schools, teacher training), the non-formal systems (literacy programs, extension programs, interpretation programs) and the informal systems (radio broadcasts, mass media) by which education and communication concerning the Rural Code may be carried out.

3. Local Capacity

- Examine local capacity of agencies and actors to perform a wide variety of education and communication tasks related to the Rural Code, from initial research and planning through implementation, to monitoring and evaluation. These can be directly or indirectly related to the Rural Code process.

4. Approaches

- Examine the capacity of the agencies to implement the various "approaches" to education and communication concerning the Rural Code.

The consultant was also responsible for conducting a rapid assessment of the primary areas related to education and communication in the Rural Code process. The following areas were identified:

1. The extent and quality of education and communication work in the Rural Code process that has already been done in Niger, noting those considered to be successful and those which are not.
2. The range and quality of the agencies/actors (donors, government, indigenous and international NGOs) involved in education and communication relevant to the Rural Code process. This includes the assessment of constraints to capacity and institutional delivery and the collection of materials.
3. The capacity of communication agencies to provide the necessary services to do education and communication work. These include the technical facilities for printing, videotaping, broadcasting, research, and other services.
4. The degree to which gender has been considered in the design, implementation, and evaluation of existing programs.

The assignment began on November 13th and ended on December 5th. Upon arrival in Niger, the consultant met with representatives of the USAID Mission to review the terms of reference and scope of work. Relevant documents and research papers were received and reviewed to assist in designing the consultation. The methods used to carry out the tasks of the consultancy consisted mainly of

personal visits to various organizations and government departments. Individuals were interviewed and general observations were documented. Where available, documents were gathered and reviewed, and several served as reference materials.

A field visit was also undertaken which allowed the consultant to examine Niger's pastoral and agricultural zones, as well as urban centers.

C. Limitations

The consultancy was timely, fitting in with the initial stages of the USAID Niger seven year Strategic Objective plan of 1995-2002. However, the terms of reference were very wide and the possibilities for assessment were exceptionally numerous. Time was the most limiting factor.

Another constraint was the difficulty in obtaining appointments with key individuals. The country experienced numerous strikes by public servants during the consultant's stay. It was also impossible to locate any identified private communications specialist during the assignment.

Nonetheless, many organizations and individuals involved in EE&C, rural development and education were contacted, and very useful information was obtained.

D. Historical Background on the Rural Code Process in Niger

The Republic of Niger is a country with a vast majority of its territory located in the Sahara desert and not in the Sahel. Its Sahelian territory, a small band of land approximately 240 kms wide which receives between 250 mm to 750 mm of rain per year, provides Niger with its economic livelihood and sustains the majority of its population. This area determines its recognition as a Sahelian country. This territory, constituting approximately 20% of the country, sustains rain-fed agriculture and the majority of pastoral activities.

The Sahelian climate is very variable and the region is ecologically frail, which poses serious problems for the survival of its inhabitants. They cannot depend on the rainy season, which historically varies in the number of days and distribution. Droughts have existed throughout history, and this represents for Niger an extremely difficult agricultural situation. This is exacerbated by one of the highest population growth rates in Africa, causing serious demographic pressures.

The *Nigérien* climate and its demographic problems have an impact on agricultural land. Good land is sparse which results in the expansion of agriculture into territories which had been previously designated as pastoral land for livestock, territories that receive less than 350 mm of rain per year. In reality, only 12% of Niger's total surface area is considered arable. All of this represents huge pressures on land and land tenure and acute environmental and natural resource degradation.

Since 1985, *Nigérien* authorities have undertaken a legislative reform process concerning land and natural resources. The commitment of the authorities was confirmed on May 29, 1986, when an ad

hoc committee was established to develop a Rural Code. In July 1989, the ad hoc committee was replaced by the National Committee of the Rural Code (NCRC) in order to give further strength to the structure. The operational structure of the NCRC exists through the Permanent Secretariat of the Rural Code (PSRC).

Land management is a complex issue in Niger due to the co-existence of several legal systems:

- customary law
- Islamic law
- colonial law
- the laws and regulations of the *Nigérien* State

The Rural Code attempts to progressively take the place of all the pre-existing laws and regulations, be they written or customary. It is an instrument which attempts to define the status of land and serves as a judicial tool which allows for the efficient management of all the elements of rural areas: land, pastures, forests, animals and water resources.

Specifically, the Rural Code:

- governs access rights to land and land management;
- fills the institutional and judicial gaps, notably the uncertainty of farmers and herders as to their rights over land;
- poses concrete questions regarding social cohesion, notably those that pertain to cultural barriers, to litigation and to the diverse methods of appropriating land; and,
- places the emphasis on the necessity of securing rural producers and to build their capacity to creatively develop their surroundings.

The *Principes d'Orientation du Code Rural*, as a judicial framework, is a tool which will permit the clarification and the recognition of rights and duties, obligations and sanctions, and opportunities for recourse. It is primarily a development tool, which bears the seal of political will.

After many studies and national debates, the first legislative texts were produced in 1993, the laws concerning the *Principes d'Orientation du Code Rural* and the law concerning the *Régimes de l'Eau*. These texts set the stage for the development of complementary texts with the objective of enabling the application of these two laws.

Since 1993, several activities aimed at popularizing the Rural Code have taken place. Five complementary texts have been written and will soon be disseminated.

E. Historical Background of IEC in Niger

In 1964-65 supported by UNESCO, Niger adopted a media-based educational system that supported formal and basic education as well as providing community education. Villages were supplied with community televisions (solar systems) and radios. Broadcasts supplemented the school programs as well as community clubs. Literacy, health education, agriculture--all were the subjects of community broadcasts. Evaluations showed considerable success of the system as scores for children educated through a combination of mediated and interpersonal instruction showed substantially higher than scores for students who were educated by a teacher only. At their peak the tele-clubs involved 1500 teachers and 197 teaching centers. The clubs faced considerable opposition internally--distrust by public officials; suspicion on the part of local authorities; ambivalence on the part of community leaders. Eventually the system collapsed to be revived only a few years ago through the current radio club system.

The system today is only a shadow of its former glory but the potential for IEC infrastructure development is still apparent. The radio-club system (the TV club system is defunct) is supported by donors and is severely limited in its ability to take on additional sector tasks without large infusions of funds to support institutional as well as program costs. Other IEC infrastructures are also lacking. Printing facilities are limited, advertising agencies to support large campaigns do not exist, video-taping and production facilities are very limited such that national TV does little original broadcasting. Consequently, viewing audiences for other than the international/cable channels/frequencies are limited. On the other hand Internet capacity will be available in Niger as of late 1996-97 providing an opportunity for some IEC infrastructure development. Portable/roving commercial video operations roaming the villages and an investment in certain infrastructure would have enormous potential for accelerating the consultative and information/promotion process.

At the same time as infrastructure development is lacking, the trained and specialized manpower to adequately plan, implement and evaluate IEC activities is also missing. Social science research capacity, production capacity, strategic and systematic design capacity are all absent and require considerable technical assistance support. What is in abundance is the demand for IEC. What is evident is the need for IEC.

SECTION II

USAID/NIAMEY - PROPOSED COUNTRY STRATEGY PLAN 1995 TO 2002

The following section describes the Mission Strategic Objectives and provides guidance on the integration of environmental education and communication into its programming. IEC considerations clearly impacted the mission's three strategic objectives. As such, it fits into other cross-cultural issues such as gender and NGO capacity-building.

U.S. development programs in Niger are aimed at helping people gain a bigger say in their daily lives and sustain improved livelihoods. The Mission's goals and strategic objectives were set towards those ends. The USAID/Niamey program supports a healthier *Nigérien* population growing at a slower rate that enjoys higher rural production, including food, and better conservation of its environment. Three strategic objectives serve that goal and are described as follows:

SO1. Increase the use of family planning and maternal/child health (FP/MCH) services, and improve child nutrition for lower fertility and infant/child mortality rates.

SO1 addresses the health needs of the *Nigérien* family, specifically the family planning and maternal child health (FP/MCH) needs of women and children. SO1 will be realized by 2002 and its results will contribute to Niger having a healthier population and, eventually, an economically sustainable rate of population growth.

Of the many results anticipated under SO1, of relevance to this assessment is "A public better informed of key policies and legislation affecting citizens' rights and responsibilities (public health)". This effort will be directed, among others, at disseminating information about the family code and laws concerning availability of family planning, and in encouraging customers to form NGOs and local associations to provide services and to more fully represent their interests. Two of the approaches for implementing SO1 are human resource development and behavioral change of service providers, policy makers and customers. Planned activities include Information, Education and Communication (IEC) and outreach activities which will complement the strengthening of village health care providers and end users. NGOs will be supported and encouraged and supported in their efforts as developers of IEC campaigns.

The SO1 approach will also incorporate the complementarity of three cross-cutting themes: food security and disaster mitigation, participatory training, and democracy and governance. The Mission recognizes the importance of integrating these themes within all of its strategic objectives. Activities carried out under SO1 will protect food deficit areas, target health training activities and promote democratic principles. SO1 resources will, as much as possible, be mobilized to carry out activities with the purpose of increasing the awareness, knowledge and experience of *Nigérienne* women and men about key processes essential to a democratic society.

SO2. Improve access to markets especially through use of improved, decentralized financial services.

SO2 aims to help rural *Nigériens* benefit more from the commercial marketplace by having access to savings and credit services geared to their needs. The informal economic sector is flourishing and savings exist. But ordinary producers cannot readily get credit or invest their savings to earn a cash return. A bank will not do business with them. What financial services they can find are usually informal, inefficient and scarce.

Under SO2, three ongoing microenterprise programs will be made larger and more efficient and sustainable. SO2's customer is, mainly, the rural producer, be he or she farmer, herder, artisan, trader, microentrepreneur or any combination. Attention is especially directed to women.

Of the many results anticipated under SO2, of relevance to this assessment is a sub-result which seeks to achieve NRM training for qualified financial groups and financial services for NRM associations. As well, SO2 aims to improve producers' market information and increase popular knowledge of the anti-corruption law. It also is particularly concerned with getting across information that helps people function better in the marketplace and aims to sensitize men to women's important economic role. Not less than half the public information messages will be addressed to women. In related results packages for other SOs, women are expected to be as involved in health, social marketing and NRM training as men are.

SO2's efforts on decentralized financial services and economic reform contributes indirectly to all other Mission priorities - environment, population and health, democratic governance. In its cross-cutting approach the Mission will also support food security, democratic governance, natural resource management, health and population, and training in parallel with the development of community-based financial services groups.

SO3. Sustained widespread adoption of management practices improving the conservation and productive use of Niger's forests, fields, waters and pastures.

Niger's serious environmental deterioration and lagging rural productivity mean rural men and women need to take up practices that will produce more while using fewer natural resources. Their production methods must conserve and improve the fields, pastures and forests they live off and use to create products for sale. Under SO3, thousands of additional people in specific districts will be helped to use and sustain these practices. It aims to promote national use of improved practices by easing policy constraints that inhibit Niger's rural producers from adopting them. By 2000, twenty percent more families will adopt certain key practices, working in a decentralized, participatory context with GON officials and USAID partners.

SO3 is based on the assumption that the GON plans to decentralize key governing powers and because this decentralization will not have much field impact in five to eight years, the Mission will

also target its efforts directly at communities. Communities will be empowered to manage natural resources and continued progress to implement the Rural Code.

The following results are expected under SO3:

3.1 Niger's rural producers, men and women, gain greater control over their productive environment.

It is expected that small producer control over the productive environment will lead to more investment in sustainable production. An increased number of registered community institutions managing natural resources is expected, as well as an increase in the number of registered *Nigérien* intermediary institutions (NGOs, women's associations, village committees). It is also expected that environmental laws or regulations cited in the National Conference will be revised and presented before the National Assembly by 1997. In addition, three Rural Code implementing laws are expected before the National Assembly by 1997.

3.2 Increased producer access to technical information.

Information will be disseminated so as to increase the knowledge both of technologies and of markets, therefore enhancing the rate of adoption of NRM practices. Heads of household, both men and women, will be targeted.

3.3 Increased capital available for communities and individuals to invest in NRM practices.

Recognizing that capital is a significant constraint to NRM investment, it is anticipated that a significant proportion of newly available capital (NGO grants, savings and credit, cooperatives) will be invested in NRM practices, particularly at the community level. This result is cross-linked to SO2.

3.4 National capacity to promote and sustain results 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 is improved.

With the assumption that the GON and partners will strengthen the mandate of the existing NRM and disaster preparedness coordination unit, the mission intends to provide support in the development of monitoring systems, the creation of NRM and disaster management plans, as well as a disaster coordination unit.

3.5 A public well informed of key policies and legislation affecting citizens' rights and responsibilities (natural resources).

This result aims especially at helping rural producers become more aware of information that can aid them to improve their NRM practices. This may include legal information, such as awareness of land laws under the Rural Code that might help increase the security of their

own land tenure. Or, it may be information about technical practices that could be relevant to improving their productivity, income and the sustainability of the natural resources upon which they depend. Also linked with this result is the expectation that three Rural Code implementing laws will be before the National Assembly by 1997.

Since the Mission's strategic objective is to help change those behaviors which logically would lead to physical changes in the environment, the adoption of defined NRM practices will be surveyed. The Mission will undertake national level, household area probability sample surveys at four-year intervals. The first test-sample was being conducted during this consultancy.

The following report documents that there is strong need for strategic objective 3.5. It highlights the enabling factors that allow improved education and communication related to the environment and natural resource management as well. It is important to stress that prior to disseminating information, the capacity to disseminate it - to implement education and communication activities - must be built. Results of this assessment have shown that EE&C capacity is very weak in Niger.

It is important to highlight that IEC plays a key role in each of USAID/Niamey's three Strategic Objectives. Therefore, any NRM IEC strategy should be seen as complementary to current IEC activities in the health, finance and agriculture sectors, and can only serve to re-enforce these initiatives. With a strong focus on IEC, the mission may consider developing a multi-sectoral IEC unit, providing technical support in IEC to all SOs, enabling the mission to coordinate all its IEC initiatives, and enhancing its capacity to integrate each SO.

SECTION III GENDER ISSUES

The following section provides an overview of the status of women in Niger and highlights the implications for general Environmental Education and Communication initiatives, and EE&C for the Rural Code. Questions regarding EE&C and women in Niger were asked in all of the consultant's interviews. In-depth discussions on the topic were held with the following individuals:

Name: Hadiza Djibo, Program Officer
Gender and Development Program

Organization: USAID Niger

Name: Eliane Allagbada

Organization: Association des Femmes Juristes du Niger
B.P. 10689, Niamey, Niger
Tel: 72 36 00/72 31 31

These discussions were supplemented by meetings held with women during a field trip to Maradi district, organized by the *Fédération des Eleveurs du Niger*. The consultant met with rural women in the village of Olly Tadetia (Hausa, Fulani, and Tuareg), and with a group of urban women in the town of Konni (Fulani).

In addition to personal interviews and discussions, documentation on the status of women was collected and analyzed. This section is presented through a summary of findings, an analysis and recommendations.

Summary of findings:

Economy

It is estimated that 50.3% of Niger's population is made up of women. The majority of *Nigérienne* women live in rural areas where they are active in agriculture, livestock rearing or artisan labor, adding to their many domestic responsibilities. A rural *Nigérienne* woman dedicates 17 hours a day of physical energy on these tasks. Many efforts have been made to lighten their burden such as the installation of grinding mills and the distribution of agricultural implements in some rural areas. Unfortunately only a small number of women have benefitted from these new technologies.

Nigérienne women are very active in the informal and small scale business sector. 83.4% of women are involved in revenue generating activities. Their lack of knowledge of new technologies and their restricted access to credit and property are constraints which seriously limit women's financial

autonomy. Their participation in the paid labor force, particularly in decision-making positions is minimal. In the public sector, there is no official discrimination in the hiring process, but women are seriously under-represented in management positions. Of the 19.5% of public sector employees who are women, only 12.5% occupy management positions. In the private sector, men are favored over women. Women represent only 10% of the private sector labor force.

Health

Although much progress has been achieved in health care since 1960, *Nigérienne* women's health remains very precarious. They continue to be affected by many infectious diseases such as meningitis, STDs and AIDS. This adds to an already rapid ageing process due to poor nutrition, excess work, multiple and poorly spaced births, as well as early pregnancies. In rural areas the maternal mortality rate is 9% and in some districts it reaches 11%. Only 149 women out 1000 benefit from deliveries assisted by a health professional. The lack of health facilities is striking. Only 32% of women live within less than 5 kms of a health center. The fecundity index for Niger is 7.37 children per woman. In some regions the index is over 8 children per woman. One *Nigérienne* woman in two has her first child before the age of 18.

Early and poorly spaced multiple pregnancies, as well as early weaning are seen as the main causes of Niger's high maternal mortality rate (7/1000) and infant mortality rate (123/1000). The infant and child mortality rates are higher among sedentary communities (170/1000 and 141/1000 respectively) than among the nomadic communities (134/1000 and 106/1000 respectively). UNICEF suggests that the infant and child mortality rates increased in the 1980s due to economic hardships, repeated droughts which caused insecurity in food supplies and malnutrition.

Severe demographic pressures add to the strain on health services and on development as a whole. Niger does have a National Family Planning Policy which promotes child spacing through the use of modern methods, primarily female contraceptives. Many organizations throughout Niger are involved in promoting family planning. Nonetheless, the lack of health facilities and trained professionals, the weakness of education and communication campaigns and the cultural pressures for large families undermine this policy, especially in rural areas.

Education and Literacy

As of 1994, girls represented only 37% of the total number of students in Niger. Due to the economic crisis, school is no longer perceived as an opportunity to gain employment. Parents, especially in rural areas, prefer to keep their daughters at home to contribute to household labor and family income. According to cultural norms, the best role for a woman is that of wife, mother and guardian of the household. 80% of girls between the ages of 7 and 12 do not attend school, reaching 90% in rural areas. 98% of children (both sexes) aged 7 to 12 from nomadic populations do not attend school. As of 1993, Niger's global literacy rate was 17%. Only 9% of women are literate compared to a rate of 19% for men. According to Niger's 1988 Population Census, one rural dweller for every five urban dwellers and one nomad for every five sedentary farmers attends school. Rural and nomadic women are the most disadvantaged. The contrasts are greatest when compared to urban women. One nomadic girl and one rural girl is literate for every eight urban girls over 10 years of

age. For women over 15 years of age, the proportions are one to three and one to nine respectively. While Islamic scholars have argued for the education of women, the reality in Niger suggests that other values are held in higher esteem than the education of girls. Negative impressions about Western education appear to be affecting attendance of boys and girls in elementary schools. Rural families are increasingly turning to Koranic instruction for their children as a result.

Law

Three legal systems co-exist in Niger: civil, Islamic and customary law. Women in Niger are largely unaware of their legal rights and are victims of much discrimination. A recently introduced Family Code aiming to improve the quality of life of *Nigérienne* women has been attacked by Muslim fundamentalist groups and its adoption has thus been delayed.

According to Muslim law a woman is perpetually under the guardianship of a man: of her father as a child and of her husband or older male relative as an adult. Islamic norms govern marriage in Niger. The husband is the head of the household. He must maintain his wife with food, clothing, and lodging even if his wife is financially able to do so. The wife is in charge of domestic responsibilities. A husband's approval of his wife's movements is widely accepted in Niger - he can forbid her to attend meetings or other activities outside the home. Seclusion is also enforced sporadically and in its early years the *Association des Femmes du Niger* complained that efforts to organize women were often impeded by high absenteeism caused by husbands refusing to allow their wives permission to attend meetings.

Women's Organizations

As early as the 1950's, the *Association des Femmes du Niger (AFN)* and the *Union des Femmes du Niger* were active in attempting to mobilize *Nigérienne* women, but their activities were restricted to Niamey. Today the AFN maintains a network of groups in all *Départements* down to the village level. They have developed community based initiatives for women such as literacy and gardening projects, set up women's community centers and have persistent advocates for the passage of the Family Code. In the 1990's many women's organizations operate nationally and are united by a coordinating body called *Coordination des Organisations Non Gouvernementales et Associations Féminines Nigériennes (CONGAFEN)*. It is a network of 31 membership based organizations working in education, communication, law, environment as well as social, cultural, political and economic issues affecting women.

In the rural areas, women's organization life remains weak. While women have closely bonded friends and neighbors with whom they may cooperate in seasonal agricultural tasks and gift exchanges, they have not formed groups for collective economic and productive activity. Rotating credit societies (*tontines* in French) are common patterns of association, but today are geared to women's cash needs for ceremonies. In the past, women have not benefitted from the cooperative movement in Niger. They are unable to be members of cooperatives because they are not legally viewed as *chefs d'exploitation* (a man who has fields and dependents). Additional barriers to women's participation in cooperatives include their generally low level of education, cultural norms that prohibit their attendance at public meetings, and the burden of domestic chores. Today, several development

initiatives are endeavoring to improve this situation and are assisting women in organizing themselves at the rural level.

Analysis:

It is evident that tremendous disparities exist between sexes, between urban and rural dwellers and between nomadic and sedenterized *Nigériens*. Many projects and environmental initiatives have not taken the particular needs of *Nigérienne* women into consideration. Many initiatives in EE&C have not adapted their programs to the constraints in reaching rural women. This is due to an identified lack of awareness of gender among many development projects, both at the grassroots and national level. Women's organizations are beginning to gain strength in Niger, although no organization with the capacity to integrate EE&C was identified.

It is important to note that women's primary concerns are not environmental issues. They are aware of the growing scarcity of firewood and water, but women's primary concerns are the health and survival of their children, following this would be education, both for themselves and their children, and food security. Concern for the environment would follow these.

Recommendations:

1. A Gender Awareness Training Workshop should be held nationally to assist grassroots and national environmental initiatives in integrating gender issues into their programs.
2. National Workshops could be followed by Regional Training Workshops.
3. Selected women's organizations should be assisted in building their capacity in the area of EE&C. Technical assistance could support this initiative.
4. Any EE&C initiative geared to women should attempt to link environmental issues with family health, education and food security issues, eg. highlighting the financial benefits of a healthy environment, protecting well water which helps prevent disease, etc.

SECTION IV

EDUCATION & COMMUNICATION AND THE RURAL CODE

The focus of the GreenCOM Environmental Education and Communication Assessment in Niger was on the country's Rural Code, still in its early stages of implementation. The Rural Code is a policy effort on the part of the Government to distribute common Government-owned land equitably. It will also regulate land use when it is complete. As mentioned, the agency responsible for its implementation is the Rural Code Permanent Secretariat (RCPS). Discussions were held with representatives of RCPS as well as many other agencies, NGOs and projects involved in the Rural Code process, both directly and indirectly. The following section is presented as a summary of findings both on the institutions responsible for Rural Code activities and on the popularization efforts on the Rural Code made to date. Constraints to education and communication of the rural code process are also summarized. A list of recommendations follows the summaries.

Questions regarding the Rural Code were posed to all individuals and representatives of organizations met by the consultant. Many organizations have been involved in some way - some have participated in communication efforts, some have memberships affected by the Rural Code, some have provided funding for its development, etc. Most of all, all *Nigériennes* are affected by the Rural Code and most international and national development agencies have a stake in the process. Meetings and discussions, combined with a multitude of documentation on the Rural Code Process, have led to the findings in this section. In addition, the consultant presented preliminary findings to the Strategic Objective Three Results Package Team A-1 on December 1, 1995. The presentation was designed to provide the consultant with feedback from the team members. The ensuing discussions provided pertinent information for this report. The list of individuals consulted is located in Annex A. The list of participants of the December 1st meeting is located in Annex B. The list of reviewed documents is included in the bibliography in Annex C.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The National Committee of the Rural Code (NCRC) and the Permanent Secretariat of the Rural Code (PSRC)

The NCRC was created in a 1989 Decree and is housed under the cabinet of the Prime Minister. It is made up of officials and technicians from the different ministries. As defined by the Decree, its role is:

- to reflect on existing rural management systems;
- to collect, analyze and disseminate tenure information;
- to define access rules to land and natural resources;
- to clarify and counsel the different intervening structures, eg. donors, NGOs, etc.;
- to assist projects and programs in decision making on allocation and management of natural resources;

- to develop legal texts and regulations to implement the dispositions of the Rural Code's *Principes d'Orientation*; and,
- to popularize and increase awareness of the texts and regulations.

To carry out these activities, the NCRC relies on the PSRC. The NCRC was actively involved during the conception of the *Principes d'Orientation* and its dissemination around the country in December 1993. Since then, the PSRC and NCRC have not collaborated effectively. In addition, shortages of financial and human resources at the PSRC have slowed the completion of the Rural Code and the implementation of tenure commissions.

Of note, the PSRC is responsible for the following activities:

- Development and production of *l'Ordonnance 93-015 - Les Principes d'Orientation du Code Rural*;
- Translation of the above into seven national languages;
- Popularization and sensitization. This process is designed to allow the PSRC to assess the opinions of the population on the Rural Code and to identify at an early stage potential conflicts arising from it therefore providing guidance to the development of complementary texts;
- Development of complementary texts, clarifying the *Principes d'Orientation* and defining their application; and,
- Establishment of Pilot Land Tenure Commissions whose aim is to assess the different problems presented by the Rural Code's application. This will in turn assist the process of implementation.

The following is a review and an analysis of the PSRC's achievements to date:

- The development and production of *l'Ordonnance 93-015 - Les Principes d'Orientation du Code Rural*. These have been distributed nationally. No information was obtained on who received the document and its impact.
- The above document has been translated into the seven national languages. Discussions revealed that the translation of the document was poor and could lead to misinterpretation of the Rural Code.
- Popularization efforts have been initiated. The planning and design of this campaign was weak. It was not based on research nor did it consider the constraints to communication in Niger, described in this report. The impact of the popularization campaign was not assessed. Gender was not considered in the design or implementation of the campaign. The campaign is said to have raised more questions than answers. The PSRC, working with the National Commission on the Popularization of the Rural Code, has been working independently of many projects and organizations with expertise in EE&C. Popularization/Communications

was highlighted as one of the most important functions of the PSCR, yet no staff member has expertise or training in communications.

- Complementary texts are being developed but, as of yet, are not completed. They are important to the process of implementing the Rural Code to allow for further consultation with affected communities to take place. Many commented on the need for further consultation on the Rural Code, particularly with the grassroots. Staff of the PSCR feel that much consultation has already been done. The consultant's observations attest that further consultation is indeed required to ensure that the Rural Code is an effective resource management tool for all concerned. A strategic consultation process could assist in the development of the complementary texts.
- Two Pilot Land Tenure Commissions have been established, with funding from DANIDA. Several more are planned for 1996 pending funding. The role of the Commissions has not yet been clearly established. The thirteen members of each commission have been trained on the Rural Code and its application, but many still misunderstand the process and the Code itself.

The PSCR employs a full-time documentalist. She manages all information (studies, reports, etc.) relating to land tenure and laws pertinent to the Rural Code in The Rural Code Documentation Center. The Center is not frequently used, the only users being primarily international consultants. Its existence has not been promoted.

An external evaluation of the Rural Code process will be conducted by USAID, DANIDA, the World Bank and the Swiss Cooperation Agency in February 1996.

Popularization of the Rural Code

In August 1993, a workshop on the Popularization of the Rural Code was held, bringing together the fourteen members of the Popularization Committee. Popularization refers to communicating the Rural Code itself and the process to the population at large. The objectives of the campaign were determined to be:

- to inform all *Nigériens* of the contents of the *Loi d'Orientation*.
- to assure *Nigériens* as to its contents, this not being possible until all nationals have a complete understanding of it.

To accomplish these objectives, it was determined that the popularization campaign address itself to the people through the mass media (radio, television, press), radio-clubs, magazines, as well as through other communication tools such as posters, pamphlets, stickers, t-shirts, conferences, etc. The committee recommended the establishment of a National Commission on the Popularization of the Rural Code, composed of 36 members. These should be specialists in different areas who are able to contribute technically or scientifically in the popularization process, in the training of targeted

audiences, in translation and information dissemination. The National Commission was charged with the development and organization of a popularization campaign for the Rural Code.

Workshop participants also developed a list of target groups for the popularization of the Rural Code. They were identified as follows:

- Rural producers (agriculture and livestock)
- Associations (Traditional Chiefs, Women, Religious and Human Rights)
- Print media
- NGOs
- Development projects
- The University
- Primary and secondary schools
- Libraries
- Administrators (Central, District and Territories)
- Political parties
- Embassies
- International organizations
- United Nations delegations

One of the roles identified for the National Committee was the identification of specific strategies for each target group. It was determined that radio would be used as the primary method for rural producers and that NGOs and political parties would receive copies of the *Loi d'Orientation*.

Specific actions were identified including the translation in all national languages and mass distribution of the *Loi d'Orientation*; radio programs, debates and interviews; radio dramas; television publicity, shows and debates; radio club debates; press reports and advertisements; the development of support material (pamphlets, stickers, etc.); and, conference-debates in Niamey and all the departments. The committee also identified training needs which included training for the committee, departmental heads, traditional chiefs, religious leaders, associations, NGOs, and projects. The training would focus on developing a full understanding of the contents of the *Loi d'Orientation* and the capacity to train other target groups. A budget of 40 million CFA had been established for the campaign.

In 1994, the National Committee of the Rural Code conducted an internal evaluation of the Rural Code Popularization Campaign. The following is a summary of the findings:

- 25 million CFA of the 40 million CFA budget was raised.
- A National Commission on the Popularization of the Rural Code was formed on October 6 1993, composed of 36 members.
- "A Training of Trainers Guide" was produced.
- Mass promotion of the law in 7 national languages was conducted.
- Radio and television shows in French and all national languages were broadcast at least once.

- Conference-debates for tertiary level students and teachers were held in Kollo.
- A public conference was held in Dosso.
- Popularization sessions were held for institutions and organizations involved in rural natural resource management.
- 11 regional popularization workshops were held, bringing together *Sous-Préfets* and Mayors, Judges, Departmental Directors, Project Directors, Provincial Chiefs, Sultans, Canton and Group Chiefs as well as marabouts.

Other than listing the achievements and concerns raised through the popularization workshops, the evaluation did not provide any analysis of the popularization campaign's results. Some measurable targets had been set during the 1993 Popularization Workshop. The evaluation did suggest that an external evaluation of the popularization process could measure the impact of the campaign on rural communities.

It is important to note that the 11 regional popularization workshops provided guidance to the Rural Code process. The following is a list of some of the recommendations and suggestions presented:

- the development of Land Tenure Commissions and the sourcing of operational funds;
- certain provisions of the Rural Code will cause conflicts and therefore the solutions to these conflicts lies in the elaboration of legislative texts; and,
- accelerate the process of developing complementary texts and include rural producers in the process.

The SPCR has recognized the importance of EE&C to the Rural Code process. Although a good effort was made in developing the popularization campaign, it was not based on any research, its target audiences were varied, it did not define what it was intending to popularize, ie. the message, and its impact was not measured. These limitations were due to a lack of financial resources. It is also important to note that considerable sums of money were spent on these initiatives, but the absence of expertise and strategic planning resulted in a weak campaign that has potentially raised more questions, and opened the doors for more conflict, than it should have.

CONSTRAINTS

The identification of constraints to Education and Communication concerning the Rural Code serves to highlight key problems that exist and will likely affect any initiative undertaken.

Top Down Approach

It is apparent that the popularization efforts of the Rural Code have until now used a one-way, top-down approach. Evidence on how communities were consulted in the development of the *Loi d'Orientation* or the Complementary Texts, was not made available. Staff of the PSCR have stated that consultation has occurred nationally, and that five complementary texts have been elaborated based on these consultations. This did not seem to have been done through a strategic process

combining research and evaluation methodologies. Representatives of livestock herders' groups stated that they had simply been gathered and told about the Rural Code's existence.

According to many, the Rural Code process was initially envisaged to be a dynamic process, with information being passed down and back up through the *Sous-Préfectures*. Since this process was started, all the *Sous-Préfets* have been changed and the dynamic process no longer exists.

The Rural Code has serious implications on the lives of rural *Nigériens*, and tensions have already been created through the initial stages of its implementation. Information on rural community members' knowledge of natural resource and environmental issues, their ideas surrounding land and resource tenure issues, their suggestions for implementation and even popularization, are crucial to developing a Rural Code that will not cause tensions or conflicts, and a popularization effort that will be effective.

The Marginalization of Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities

Nomadic and semi-nomadic communities, primarily Fulani and Tuareg, have not been fully included in the Rural Code process. This is partially due to their lifestyle which makes them more difficult to access and to political problems in the northern areas of Niger, the territory of many nomadic tribes. Many also reside in pastoral zones. Few projects intervene at all in these areas.

The majority of nomadic communities are pastoralists and agro-pastoralists who maintain livestock herds as their prime means of livelihood. They are greatly affected by the Rural Code, particularly concerning rights over grazing areas and corridors, and access to water. The Rural Code has serious implications on their livelihood. Tensions among these communities are mounting on this issue, and conflicts (some of them serious, such as in Toda in 1991) between herders and farmers are escalating. Little arable land is available to nomadic communities, and sedentary communities can now own or control land that was once shared.

Meetings held with members of both Fulani and Tuareg communities found that many were familiar with certain principles surrounding the Rural Code, or at least knew of its existence. But it seems that many are also misinformed, which has serious implications on any EE&C initiative.

Lack of Capacity in Education and Communication

The consultant was unable to visit existing technical communication facilities such as printing houses and video production centers. One organization identified as a potentially good resource was unavailable, (Anfanni). From interviews it was gathered that the capacity in the area of technical communication services is very weak in Niger. Few printing houses exist and none currently provides full color production.

The consultant was only able to identify a few individuals with expertise in Education and Communication, specifically development of communication materials and training. These were all expatriates. No *Nigérien* expert in Education and Communication was identified.

The lack of technical capacity has implications on the development of Education and Communication for the Rural Code and for general EE&C.

Lack of Coordination in Environmental Education and Communication

Many environment programs and organizations are specialized in education and communication or at least have a certain capacity to implement such initiatives. Until now, coordination has been weak and there has been overlap in programming and projects. Without coordination, the implementation of an EE&C campaign for the Rural Code is difficult. The development of IUCN's Environmental Education Network will likely alleviate this constraint.

Limited Access to Conventional Media

Few individuals in rural areas have access to radio, television or printed materials. Newspapers have a limited audience even with the growth in private press in the past several years. Circulation rarely surpasses 10,000 and remains limited to larger urban centers. No publication is currently geared to rural populations. Radio transmission covers the entire country and is currently being regionalized, with the assistance of the Federal Republic of Germany. Television is available in most of the country. Nonetheless, only 18.5% of households have radios and only 2.9% of households have televisions. These figures represent ownership and not access. Studies have also established that only 5% of women have access to radios. Even if made available, women's long days of labor considerably limit the amount of time they could spend listening to the radio or watching television.

As of 1993, Niger's global literacy rate was 17%. Only 9% of women are literate, compared to a rate of 19% for men. Illiteracy rates are higher among rural dwellers, and even higher for nomadic populations. The low rate of education at 27% also limits access to information. The necessity for alternative forms of education and communication cannot be overemphasized.

Difficulty in Accessing Women

As described earlier, access to rural women in Niger can be difficult. Low literacy rates, domestic responsibilities, social and cultural constraints, including seclusion which is practiced sporadically throughout Niger, make it very difficult to reach women. Women's marginalization in rural societies can easily lead to their marginalization in the Rural Code process. Women's roles in natural resource use and management are great in Niger and their inclusion must be ensured. Special measures will have to be taken to develop suitable EE&C interventions that will ensure women are being reached and included in the Rural Code process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Baseline Study

That a study be conducted to assess the knowledge of rural producers on the Rural Code. The consultant found that many people have developed a negative impression of the Rural Code process and are skeptical. People have not necessarily been informed, but have been misinformed and therefore have misinterpreted the Rural Code, its application and its implications. People's perceptions must be analyzed before developing a strategic EE&C

campaign. A behavioral analysis of Niger's rural communities, sedentary and nomadic, would complement this study. This baseline information will assist in developing EE&C initiatives for the Rural Code. USAID, through an agreement with Chemonics International, recently embarked on the first phase of a national Demographic Household Knowledge Survey on Natural Resources. A test sample was being conducted during the consultant's visit. Samples will be collected at four-year intervals. Information derived from the surveys will provide some guidance to the development of EE&C initiatives for the Rural Code.

2. **Consultative Approach**

The first step in an EE&C strategy for the Rural Code should be to engage in a renewed, strategically developed consultative approach. It is not too late for such an approach to be initiated. The focus should be on reviewing and repairing misconceptions and building consensus which will re-build the confidence of rural producers while engaging them in the Rural Code process. A straightforward EE&C initiative on the Rural Code, ie. popularization, is premature. The risks associated with straight popularization are great, ranging from the Rural Code being ignored to causing serious conflicts between families and ethnic groups. Strategies for a consultative approach should emphasize the use of participatory methodologies.

3. **Consultation Feedback into Complementary Texts**

Feedback obtained through a consultative approach should be used in the development of complementary texts.

4. **Role of Land Tenure Commissions**

The role of the Land Tenure Commissions should be clearly determined and their participation in EE&C initiatives should be essential.

5. **Translation**

The translation of *Les Principes d'Orientation du Code Rural* should be reviewed and corrected prior to dissemination. The translations should be completed prior to EE&C initiatives. Simplified reference materials explaining the Code and pointing out implications for communities should be developed. These document, translated into the relevant national languages, would serve as a discussion point.

6. **Meet the special needs of women**

Any EE&C initiative for the Rural Code, baseline studies, consultative activities and direct EE&C campaigns should be designed to reflect the particular needs of Niger's rural women. EE&C initiatives need to be specifically targeted to and designed for rural women. Because of their low education levels and common illiteracy, as well as the cultural and religious barriers experienced, initiatives need to be modified to meet their special requirements. It is recommended that special gatherings be held only for women, as women cannot be expected to be gathered with men. Even if they are able to participate in a group with men, they are unlikely to contribute fully in a mixed group.

7. **Include Gender Awareness**

Any EE&C initiative for the Rural Code should attempt to include a gender awareness component. This could be done by encouraging discussion among men's groups and women's groups on the role of women in natural resource management. This could be achieved once institutions involved in the Rural Code process have received Gender Awareness Training as recommended in the previous section.
8. **Meet the special needs of nomadic/semi-nomadic communities**

Any EE&C initiative for the Rural Code, baseline studies, consultative activities and direct EE&C campaigns, should be designed to reflect the particular needs of Niger's nomadic and semi-nomadic communities. EE&C initiatives need to be specifically targeted to and designed for these communities. Because of their low education levels, the high level of illiteracy, particularly among women, as well as the difficulty in accessing them due to their lifestyle and the political disturbances in the pastoral zones, initiatives need to be modified to meet their special requirements.
9. **Diffuse Tensions**

An EE&C initiative for the Rural Code will need to diffuse the tensions which exist surrounding the issue. Methods which could be used include humor through theater and *griots*, puppets and music.
10. **Need for creative interventions**

Any EE&C intervention should be designed creatively. Conventional media such as newspapers, radio and television, reach very few people in Niger, particularly in rural areas. EE&C for the Rural Code should be designed with these barriers in mind. Interventions can include the use of community animation groups, *griots*, puppet theaters, dramas/comedies, mobile video units, etc. The consultant was told that various troupes and groups offering these services exist around the country. A comprehensive survey of available resources would assist in identifying potential activities.
11. **Use of grassroots resources**

Local, grassroots resources should be used for all EE&C initiatives related to the Rural Code. Rural communities respond better to individuals from their own area, someone they know, as opposed to an outsider or a foreigner. Activities should be developed to meet the particular needs of each district and where possible should be determined by the community members themselves. The capacity of grassroots organizations and national organizations operating at the grassroots, should be built to ensure their participation in the development, implementation and evaluation of Rural Code EE&C initiatives.
12. **Encourage dialogue between agriculturalists and pastoralists**

An EE&C initiative for the Rural Code should include the introduction of a dialogue process between agriculturalists and pastoralists, sedentary and nomadic. This could be implemented through grassroots organizations and the use of participatory methodologies.

13. **Coordinating Committee for EE&C and the Rural Code**

All EE&C initiatives for the Rural Code, should be implemented through a Coordinating Committee, not solely by the PSRC or the CPRC. Many resources available to EE&C efforts, other than RIDD-FITILA and ONVPE, have not been used in the popularization process. Many organizations which could have assisted or benefitted from being informed were not involved. The newly formed Environmental Education Network (IUCN) will likely be in a position to identify potential resources. Representatives of organizations, government institutions and projects involved in grassroots development could bring needed expertise to the process of developing, implementing and evaluating an EE&C initiative for the Rural Code. All available resources should be used in order to ensure that a cohesive message is being transmitted nationally, that all Nigériens are being reached and to make the most efficient use of limited financial resources. A coordinated effort, which includes all pertinent sectors and agencies and makes maximum use of all resources, would benefit the entire process.
14. **EE&C Coordinator for the Rural Code**

Given that the responsibility for EE&C for the Rural Code should be placed in the hands of a Coordinating Committee, and with financial resources permitting, a coordinator responsible for EE&C of the Rural Code should be appointed. This person would work closely with all agencies involved in the EE&C process, ensuring a clear and cohesive national initiative. This person could work through the PSRC or any other appropriate institution, and should be provided with long-term technical assistance as well as short-term strategic assistance. In addition to TA, the program responsible for promoting the Rural code should receive funding to develop materials, conduct campaigns, and mobilize groups.
15. **Communication and the evaluation of the PSRC**

The upcoming external evaluation of the Rural Code should examine the achievements of the PSRC in the area of EE&C, particularly the Rural Code popularization efforts.
16. **LTC Research**

Over the past five years, much research has been conducted on the Rural Code process, primarily by the Land Tenure Center of the University of Wisconsin, through a cooperative agreement with USAID. This information must be used in guiding initiatives in EE&C for the Rural Code.
17. **Long-Term Support**

Long-term institutional support is recommended to:

 - Build the capacity of NGOs, Government agencies, academic institutions and the private sector to develop, implement and evaluate EE&C initiatives, and provide supportive services, including those specific to the Rural Code.

- Assist in the development of a National Rural Code EE&C Coordinating Committee and train a Nigérien coordinator.
- Develop a communication program in support of the Rural Code.

A resident advisor would not only assist EE&C as it relates to the Rural Code, but also in developing a national capacity in EE&C. Therefore, an advisor should be attached to a general environmental/natural resource institution such as the Ministry of Water and Environment, IUCN or the C/GRN. An alternative is to provide for a stand-alone communication project that supports multiple initiatives.

18. **Slow down process and include rural communities**

Finally, the extremely sensitive nature of land and natural resource tenure cannot be overemphasized. The Rural Code Process includes the procedures through which land and natural resource tenure systems are formalized, popularized, and implemented at the national and local levels. It is evident that conflicts have been created as a result of the Rural Code process and its impending application. Conflicts over land and natural resource tenure are common the world over. Experience has shown that this process takes a long time, particularly the process of building consensus. Therefore it is recommended that emphasis be placed on empowering communities to take part in the Rural Code process.

SECTION V

GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION ASSESSMENT

The aim of Section V is to describe existing programs and initiatives which currently, and could in the future, support EE&C initiatives in Niger, including those specifically related to the Rural Code process. It is presented through a summary of findings based on the consultant's meetings with targeted agencies in Niger.

NATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Organization: L'Association des Radios Clubs du Niger

Contact: Mahamane Bakabé, Président

Address: Directeur de la Communication
Ministère de la Communication
B.P. 368, Niamey, Niger

Telephone: 72 26 44

Description of organization:

This organization is a radio club network, composed of 408 animators located throughout the country. The club animators receive audio tapes on selected subjects and assemble villagers to listen to the transmission which usually lasts approximately 10 minutes. Following this, the animator leads a debate on the subject, allowing the community members to learn about the issue and identify their concerns. These debates are taped and sent back to the organization responsible for developing the tapes. This allows organizations to receive feedback on the issue, highlighting the communities' understanding and their concerns.

The animators are volunteers. They are provided with the necessary equipment and training. They are chosen by the community members and must be literate. The organization has five paid staff members based in Niamey. The staff is composed of two producers, one documentalist, one technician and one office assistant. Funding comes from the state. International donors have used the services of the association and by paying for these services, have provided the association with needed funding. These include UNICEF, USAID-Niger (through the Office of Democracy, Governance and Local Participation) and UNESCO.

Animators are trained in the technical aspects of the program, ie. how to operate the equipment, the role of an animator, as well as on specific issues covered by the association. They are also trained

to encourage community members to engage in a collective decision making process which focuses on solutions and actions to be taken. Of note, fifty animators received training funded by USAID.

UNICEF, through a cooperative agreement with the Ministry of Communications, works with the association in its IEC initiatives. They have provided the association with a vehicle as part of this agreement. The UNICEF initiative is described in greater detail further on in this document.

Environmental issues have been included in the association's broadcasts. One tape and broadcast session was done on the Rural Code, but no analysis was conducted to determine its impact.

Analysis:

The *Association des Radios Clubs du Niger* is an organization which could potentially be a strong player in community based environmental education and communication initiatives. Based on feedback from organizations which have worked closely with the association and from comments made by its president, Mahamane Bakabé, the organization remains weak in its capacity to develop material and follow up on results from the debates. In addition, animators require continued training on the issues assigned to them. With strengthening, the Radio Clubs could become a major channel of communication to the general public, especially out-of-school youth, women and the non-literate community at large.

Recommendations:

1. The *Association des Radios Clubs du Niger* could be assisted in building its capacity as an education and communication NGO. This initiative could be coordinated with UNICEF in light of its long-standing and well-developed relationship with the association. Capacity-building would include funding for home office costs, staff/volunteer training, financial management training, and IEC training.
2. Once the association's capacity is built, they would be well placed to provide both general EE&C at the village level, as well as be involved in EE&C specific to the Rural Code. They could be used as a communication channel to the general public, accessing communities that are difficult to reach, such as out of school youth, women and the non-literate communities.
3. The capacity of the organization to conduct social science research should be built as the nature of the Radio Clubs allows it to gather feedback from rural communities on environmental issues and the Rural Code. Technical assistance would assist with this initiative.

Organization: La Fédération Nationale des Eleveurs du Niger (FNEN)

Contact: Dr. Boubacar Hassane, Président

Address: B.P. 651
Niamey, Niger

Telephone: 75 24 49

Others contacted: Mahamado Maman, President, and members of the FNEN-Maradi District
Ardo Choro, President of the FNEN-Olly Tadetia and surrounding villages
Hodi Bammo, President of FNEN-Dakoro Ward

Description of organization:

One of the primary goals of the association is to educate its members on the Rural Code process in order for them to participate effectively. Although most of the FNEN members are men, certain regional women's groupings are being formed. They consist of female family members of livestock producers living in urban centers. Members pay an annual fee of CFA 500 and the organization, formed only one year ago, hopes to develop projects such as revolving loan schemes.

It is important to note that the FNEN is only one of eight organizations representing livestock producers in Niger. Due to time constraints, it was impossible to meet with representatives from other organizations.

Analysis:

One of the most sensitive issues surrounding the Rural Code is its implications on the nomadic and semi-nomadic livestock producers. Their input into the Rural Code process has until now been minimal, partially due to the difficulty in accessing them. Of particular importance is the extent of land degradation in Niger's pastoral zones and the environmental implications of sedentarization of the people on the whole country.

It is evident that the capacity of many of these organizations is weak due to fragmentation. They have had little, if any, experience in EE&C.

Recommendations:

1. The FNEN, and the other organizations representing livestock producers, could be involved in EE&C activities specific to the Rural Code. Their structures could serve as useful mechanisms to reach a difficult-to-access population in this vast country. Suitable

organizations representing livestock producers could be identified, following which their capacity to implement EE&C programs could be built. Technical assistance would assist in this initiative.

2. The EE&C role of organizations representing livestock producers should not only be relegated to the Rural Code, but should integrate all environmental issues relevant to livestock producers/herders. Any EE&C initiative targeted to this group should endeavor to:
 - link benefits and the Rural Code process
 - ease tensions currently existing regarding the Rural Code process
3. Any EE&C initiative through livestock producers should attempt to ensure that all organizations' endeavors are coordinated.

Organization: **Le Réseau d'Intégration et de Diffusion du Droit en Milieu Rural (RIDD-FITILA)**

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Others contacted: **Salmou Magagi, Animator, Clinique Juridique de Safo
Hanatou Rébo, Animator, Clinique Juridique de Madarumpfa**

Description of organization:

The main objective of RIDD-FITILA is to educate rural communities on the laws of Niger. To achieve this objective, the "Village Law Project" was developed. The project has provided training for village para-legals as well as established legal clinics for rural women.

The para-legals, trained by legal specialists, are responsible for disseminating information to village dwellers on laws affecting them. Volunteers, they live in rural areas and travel to surrounding villages disseminating information. They are selected from the communities in which they reside and are usually teachers, health workers, local government agents, etc. Sixty-five para-legals have been trained in ten-day seminars and are located in the following departments: Maradi, Tahoua, Dosso, Zinder, Diffa and Tillabéry. They are equipped with audiocassette players and audiotapes containing broadcasts on specific topics narrated by an appropriate specialist. These are used to engage villagers

in debates and provide a medium of education on targeted topics. The para-legals are also supplied with supporting materials to assist in their duties.

The legal clinics were created due to the sociological and demographic realities of *Nigérienne* women. RIDD-FITILA aims to provide women with information and training in civic education as well as legal advice because women are deemed to be marginalized from the judicial process yet represent over 52% of the population. Due to the high rate of illiteracy among *Nigérienne* women, the legal clinics aim to make the law more accessible. Seventeen clinics have been established, two more are planned. They are run by trained legal experts who are responsible for training the local animators engaged, on a volunteer basis, by each legal clinic. The clinics provide services for all rural women, including women's associations and community groups.

RIDD-FITILA's Village Law Project has also developed a series of radio programmes aired on national and regional radio stations in four of the country's eight national languages. The four are Hausa, Zarma, Ffulfulde and Kanuri. The topics covered include the Rural Code, the environment, public health, and rural cooperatives, among others. The cost to develop each radio program is CFA 60,000 (\$250.00).

Analysis:

RIDD-FITILA has developed a network which has potential to participate in EE&C efforts, including EE&C on the Rural Code. In August 1995, DANIDA, which is funding three legal clinics, conducted an evaluation of the Village Law Project. It highlighted the need for ensuring the project's sustainability which RIDD-FITILA has not yet planned for, and the importance of training more women as para-legals. It also showed weaknesses in follow-up procedures. DANIDA recommends the diversification of project activities in order to ensure its sustainability. The national staff of RIDD-FITILA is also known to have weaknesses. With little funding, some of the secretariat's four employees maintain other jobs. Weaknesses have also been identified in the area of financial management.

Recommendations:

1. Although many weaknesses have been identified in the structure and project implementation capacity of RIDD-FITILA, the organization has developed considerable experience in E&C, and on the Rural Code as well. Their network is established, although currently not fully sustainable. Through technical assistance, the capacity of this organization could be built to provide improved training in EE&C in general, as well as EE&C specific to the Rural Code.
2. Due to the organization's identified weaknesses in the areas of financial management, its capacity could also be built in this sector, through technical assistance. Based on DANIDA's recommendation that RIDD-FITILA diversify its project activities to ensure its sustainability, and since it has already engaged in training activities on the Rural Code Process, the

organization could be used for EE&C training. Its network of trained para-legals and legal clinics could also provide both general EE&C at the village level, as well as EE&C specific to the Rural Code.

3. The capacity of the organization to conduct social science research could be built as the nature of RIDD-FITILA allows it to gather feedback from rural communities on environmental issues and the Rural Code. Technical assistance would assist with this initiative.

Organization: **Organisation Nigérienne des Volontaires pour la Préservation de l'Environnement**

Contact: **Idrissa Daouda, Secrétaire Exécutif**

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Description of organization:

Created in 1989, this NGO aims to contribute to sustainable development by promoting natural resource management and conservation techniques as well as appropriate technologies to grassroots communities. Its primary focus is EE&C. It uses a participatory approach in the development, implementation and follow-up of projects. It aims to develop self sufficiency of the communities it serves through the transfer of skills. Of the many projects to be undertaken by the ONVPE, one includes providing training in EE&C methods for grassroots-based NGOs. It has recently received funding to conduct a training of trainers course for the ONVPE staff members to undertake this national project. Another ONVPE project has dealt with training in natural resource management at the village level.

The organization is active in the departments of Tillabéry (Filingué and Kollo wards) and Dosso (Gaya and Boboye wards). The secretariat has two employees and one Canadian volunteer providing management and administrative assistance. Sixteen agents are employed at the village level in the two departments mentioned above. Staff members have received training in Participatory Rural Appraisal methods. The membership of the ONVPE is made up of sociologists, economists and agricultural specialists, among other development specialists. As an organization, it has been contracted to do research in these areas using its membership for support.

Its technical partners include the government technical services; grassroots organizations (including village associations); IUCN (ONVPE is one of IUCN's two members in Niger); and the *Center*

Canadien d'Etude et de Coopération Internationale (CECI). Its financial partners include USAID; PSDS/COE (Programme de Solidarité pour le Développement du Sahel); the Fondation Jean Paul II; and Solidarité Canada Sahel (SCS).

The ONVPE has in the past conducted training workshops on the Rural Code in the two departments in which it operates. It has expressed an interest in providing similar training to targeted grassroots NGOs, in other departments. It has also expressed an interest in engaging in a participatory process on Rural Code issues, bringing together members of sedentary agricultural communities and members of nomadic livestock-producing communities.

Analysis:

The ONVPE, although operating in a limited area of Niger, has developed a strong capacity in delivering EE&C. It has experience in working at the grassroots level and in training in a variety of natural resource management initiatives. It is working closely with both donors and government services to implement its programs.

Recommendations:

1. The ONVPE has recently received funding from CECI to conduct training-of-trainers courses for its staff members in EE&C. This initiative should be monitored. If deemed successful, the model could be replicated in other departments. ONVPE's capacity could be strengthened to provide training to other departments throughout the country.
2. With its experience in EE&C, it could be well suited to assist in EE&C specific to the Rural Code.
3. The ONVPE's expressed interest in using its expertise in PRA in the Rural Code process should also be looked into as this is an area which requires attention.
4. The organization could also benefit from training in impact evaluation, allowing it to build evaluation into its programming. It should be able to assess the quality of its programs, the learning and attitudinal changes taking place, document its experience and share its results with other institutions. Technical assistance would assist in this initiative.

INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Organization: IUCN - World Conservation Union

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Others contacted: Peter J Kristensen, Program Officer

Description of organization:

The IUCN Regional Coordination Office for West Africa is located in Niamey. National integrated programs exist in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger focussing on areas corresponding to IUCN strengths, including biodiversity, protected areas, wildlife management and environmental education. The Guinea-Bissau national program is concentrated specifically on marine and coastal wetlands.

IUCN's commitment to Niger began over fifteen years ago with the support to the Aïr and Ténéré Reserves Conservation and Management Project in 1979. A national representation was created and officially recognized in 1990. Of the many initiatives undertaken by the Niger country programme, two are of particular relevance to this assessment. One involves the recent creation of a National Network/Working Group on Environmental Education. The process began in 1994 with IUCN Niger's first meeting of members, potential members and partners. In September 1995, the second meeting was held and three networks were created as follows:

- Sustainable Use network (global, regional and national network)
- Wetlands network (global, regional and national)
- Environmental Education network

It is important to note that the September 1995 meeting stressed the importance of communication, exchanges and information flow in the environment sector. Participants highlighted that communication was an essential link to natural resource management in rural areas. They requested that the possibility of building the capacity of Niger's communicators on environmental issues be explored due to the country's serious weakness in this area. The Environmental Education network will have its constitutional meeting on December 14, 1995. Twenty participants, including a representative of USAID, have been invited.

The second is the Environmental Education programme. In 1985, IUCN initiated its first Environmental Education Program called Walia in the region of Mopti in Mali. Following its success,

IUCN extended this experience to Niger. From 1990 to 1992, the Alam program worked with teachers and students in the region of Agadez. The Agadez program has been suspended due to civil unrest in the area. In 1993, with the financial support of DANIDA, IUCN identified a new program to cover the regions of Diffa and Zinder. Although similar to the Agadez programme, the Diffa-Zinder initiative has widened its target audience to include secondary students, Koranic schools and out-of-school youth. The programs -called *Katoutou* in Zinder and *Gouori* in Diffa- also involve local partners in the development and implementation of activities: radio broadcasters, community based NGOs, geography teachers, etc. Some of the activities undertaken by the program include: regional radio programs geared to out of school youth; village animation activities through a partner grassroots NGO (*Karkara*); active participation of students, teachers and administrators in environmental debate-conference activities; pedagogical support in the form of two environmental journals for children (one for each district) and practical guides for teachers; and translation of a Hausa environmental journal for children into Arabic characters for Koranic schools and workshops for local religious leaders (marabout) to assist them in developing environmental education activities. The programs are conceived and executed by teams of seven or eight professionals based in the departmental capitals. During the initial phase, the program concentrated on forty primary schools in the Diffa region and sixty primary schools in the Zinder region. This covers some 10 percent of all schools.

In 1996 the program will enter its second three year phase which aims to continue its activities in Diffa and Zinder. Based on recommendations made in a 1994 external evaluation, it hopes to strengthen the capacity of Environmental Education Program teams of Diffa-Zinder in communication and animation techniques; identify more partners (resource people, NGOs, village associations, clubs, theatre/music groups) and establish collaborative links in order to develop new EE&C activities; and develop a collaborative system with government technical services, development projects and other regional initiatives to ensure a complementary effort. The program will also aim to raise public awareness and spread environmental information to non-literate young people in rural areas with the assistance of the NGO *Karkara* in Diffa. This phase aims to touch all of the primary schools in each department. IUCN is also considering making this project a regional effort by collaborating with similar environmental education programs in Burkina-Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Mali and Senegal.

Analysis:

IUCN is an international membership organization, working with government and NGOs alike. In its aim to conserve natural resources at local, regional and international levels, IUCN works with its members, networks and partners by building their capacities and by supporting global alliances. The creation of an environmental education network is an important step for the country, as the capacity for EE&C in Niger is very weak. This network could likely provide an opportunity to strategically assess available EE resources on a continual basis and will also likely assist in coordinating EE initiatives. At this point, the mandate of the network only includes environmental education, although delegates to the September 1995 meeting identified environmental communication as an area which required strengthening as well.

IUCN Niger's Environmental Education Program has experienced great success in Diffa-Zinder and could be replicated in other districts. The emphasis of the second phase on increasing the number of partners involved in the process will assist in building the capacity of various agencies involved in environmental education and increase the potential for sustainability.

Recommendations:

1. Once established, the IUCN Niger Environmental Education Network could be supported as a way of building the country's capacity to develop, implement and monitor environmental education programs.
2. Since the capacity to implement environmental communications has been identified as being very weak in Niger and recommendations have been made to build capacity in this area, the Environmental Education Network should consider integrating environmental communications in its mandate in order to ensure complementary and integrated national EE&C programming.
3. The consultant recommends a comprehensive assessment of environmental education capacity in Niger. The Environmental Education network would be a good medium through which this assessment could be conducted. This would allow the next step, that of building the capacity of government, NGOs and grassroots organizations in environmental education, possibly extending it to environmental communications, and the Rural Code process specifically. Technical assistance for these initiatives is recommended. Through this process and through technical assistance, the capacity of the network itself to assess and analyze its needs would be built.

Organization: CARE International in Niger

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Others contacted: Zakari Madougou, Regional Director
Maradi Office

Halima Idi, Coordinator

Mata Masu Dubara Project (Women's Savings Clubs), Maradi Office

Description of organization:

Administered by CARE USA, CARE International in Niger is involved in many development initiatives. USAID is currently funding credit schemes in the Maradi district which have had extensive experience working with rural communities and women in particular. Known as *Mata Masu Dubara*, or "Women on the Move," it is a resource mobilization project operating through over 200 savings clubs. Five animators and a coordinator are employed by CARE for this initiative. It focusses on self-management and sustainability.

CARE also implements a food security program through which it has successfully used Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methods. Nine animators employed by this project use PRA methods to engage farmers in a reflective process on agricultural and environmental issues affecting them.

Of particular relevance to this assessment is CARE's Maradi Environmental Education Project, which ran from 1990 to 1993. The final evaluation showed that many constraints existed which limited the achievements of the project and, therefore, it was not renewed. The project did experience some qualitative results in that study tours and teacher-training programs were shown to have contributed to an increased awareness of environmental issues. Many lessons were learned from this project and were outlined in the final evaluation. They include:

- Schools should not be considered an exclusive partner. Collaboration with other agencies is crucial.
- A short-term initiative (three years) does not allow a project of this scale to reach its objectives.

The evaluation recommended that any initiative in environmental education in a district with over one million people should commit itself for a minimum of ten years and should involve all sectors of a community. It also highlighted the importance of a light administrative structure, such as the IUCN model, and the importance of coordinating the project with other initiatives and national and regional structures, as it is done under the PFIE.

Analysis:

CARE International has been involved in grassroots development in Niger for many years. Its experience in working with women and on environmental issues is important. It is also developing expertise in using PRA methods with rural communities. Its past initiative in environmental education also provides many insights on the development and expansion of similar projects.

CARE staff are particularly concerned about the gap in *Nigérien* IEC capacity and the need they sense in their programming. CARE would welcome any technical assistance in IEC.

Recommendation:

1. CARE's experience working at the grassroots level, its experience in mobilizing women and its experience in environmental education is important to any future EE&C initiative. It should be consulted in the development of any future EE&C programming.
2. CARE's network of women's savings clubs could be useful to disseminate information on environmental issues, general and specific to the Rural Code.
3. CARE's animators working on various projects could also be used as part of an integrated EE&C initiative, general and specific to the Rural Code.
4. CARE should receive IEC expert technical assistance to enhance its program.

Organization: **Africare Niger**

Contact: **Dr. I. Ousmane, Program Officer**

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Summary of findings:

Of relevance to this assessment is Africare's initiative in natural resource management known as the Gouré Natural Resource Management Interventions Project. Funded by USAID, the project aims to promote sustainable agricultural practices in villages where the only incentive to participate is local

control of the planning and implementation processes. The project works directly with farmers and livestock holders to assist them to benefit from their environment and reduce environmental degradation. Previously a Food for Work initiative, Africare now only assists the communities in the development of their objectives, such as sand dune fixing and digging of domestic and agricultural wells. Villages are selected for the project following discussions held with three separate groups: older men, younger men and women. Trained animators assist villagers to assess their needs and what they are able and willing to invest. Villagers are then taught about the benefits of environmental rehabilitation. Committees are set up where a minimum of one representative must be a woman. There are currently fifteen animators in eleven sites and all are from the area in which they work. There are also two Gender and Development animators. Animators are required to travel on horseback within a 100 kms radius of Gouré ward. All animators are trained in Participatory Rural Appraisal Methods and they, in turn, will be training the members of the village committees. The project has also integrated an ongoing evaluation process which monitors its social and economic impacts.

Gouré was chosen as the site for this project because it is an area that receives little development assistance due to its remote location. Gouré includes both desert and agricultural zones. Africare is collaborating with the Ministry of Water and Environment on this project.

Analysis:

Africare's Gouré Rehabilitation Project has worked closely with grassroots communities and has gained considerable experience in EE&C. It has particular relevance to EE&C initiatives, including those relating to the Rural Code.

Recommendations:

1. Africare's Gouré Rehabilitation Project could be part of a national EE&C initiative.
2. The project could also be used for an EE&C initiative specific to the Rural Code and could act as a test sample for a national campaign.

Organization: Centre Canadien d'Etude et de Cooperation International (CECI)

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Summary of findings:

While CIDA has substantially reduced its development efforts in Niger, some programs relevant to IEC continue to receive funding. In 1994, CECI conducted a study on Niger's NGOs. Although the study is an internal document, some pertinent information was obtained from this meeting. Of the sixty-two NGOs which CECI included in the study, only eight were determined to be viable, although weak administratively. CECI hopes to find funding for a project that seeks to build the capacity of viable NGOs. Through ONVPE, CECI will be providing training to grassroots NGOs in environmental education. It will also be assisting CONGAFEM, a network of women's NGOs, to build its structure and to build the capacity of its members. CECI had hoped to provide assistance to GAP, Niger's national network of NGOs, but deemed that the organization was currently not at the stage to benefit from such assistance.

Analysis:

The experience of CECI in working with Niger's NGO sector and its capacity building project in EE&C are important.

Recommendations:

1. CECI's programs should be monitored and its experiences could assist in the design of an EE&C initiative, general and specific to the Rural Code.
2. NGOs trained through ONVPE's environmental education project could be used in the implementation of national or regional EE&C initiatives, general or specific to the Rural Code.

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Ministry/Programme: **Programme de Formation et Information pour l'Environnement (PFIE)**

Contact: **Abdou Issoufou, Chef de Projet**

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Niamey, Niger**

Others contacted: **Marcel Inné, Responsable
Equipe Pédagogique et Formation**

Description of programme:

The PFIE program is a regional environmental education initiative active in the formal education sector at the primary level. It was initiated by the *Comité Permanent Interétats de Lutte Contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel* (CILSS), and sponsored by UNSO. The Niger program is nationally driven, working through a national secretariat and a national committee, with the Ministry of Education at the helm. Having recently completed its first five-year phase, it is entering its second. It has been, and will continue to be, funded by the European Community (EC). Materials are centrally produced and generic to the Sahel rather than individual countries.

The first phase saw the program spread to one hundred schools, from the department of Tillabéry to the department of Diffa. The emphasis was on developing curriculum, training teachers and supporting individual schools. Over 800 teachers and 8000 students were touched in this first phase. The program offers an integrated environmental education approach and practical school and community-based projects. The second phase of the PFIE will see the number of schools involved increase, particularly in the pastoral zones, if PFIE receives additional funding from EC.

The management structure of PFIE is small. Only three people are employed at the secretariat: the *Chef de Projet*, a secretary and a driver. The program is run by a *Comité National d'Orientation*. This committee is made up of seven people. The General Secretary of the Ministry of Education is President and the General Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Water is Vice-President. Other members represent the Ministry of Education, donors and INDRAP. The national committee defines the national orientation of the program. *Comités de Pilotages* exist at the regional level to implement the initiative. The *Equipe Pédagogique et de Formation* assists in the development of pedagogical tools and teacher training.

The program considers teacher training its most important component. A teacher's guide and supporting materials have recently been developed and distributed. Training is conducted through seminars which include technical and practical skills. Phase I involved only selected teachers in selected schools. Phase II hopes to involve and train all teachers in each selected school. Materials,

however, are produced in France and are extremely expensive to replicate and disseminate. Pedagogical style is primarily lecture and interactivity is encouraged, but not taught.

The regional CILLS initiative, based in Bamako, Mali, is also involved in EE&C programs geared to the general public but background information was not available. The PFIE has worked closely with IUCN's environmental education program as well as with other national and international initiatives.

Analysis:

The PFIE program is one of the few environmental education initiatives operating specifically in the formal sector, even though in a limited number of schools. It has had long-term support, is run by a multi-disciplinary team and has an efficient structure. Being a regional initiative, it makes great use of resources such as text books and teacher training manuals. The program has also built linkages with other environmental education initiatives in Niger, such as those run by IUCN, CARE (now defunct), SNV, and GTZ. From the consultant's meeting with the *Chef de Projet*, it was learned that the Ministry of Education is highly supportive of the PFIE program.

This project has great potential to integrate its formal program with community activities, such as firebreaks, orchards, nurseries, etc. Although the educational effect on the community at large is anticipated by the PFIE, it has not been strategically integrated.

Most formal education activities are designed to develop a responsible citizenship for the future. Children's programs and activities in schools and in extra-curricular activities are intended to foster a respect for the environment that will continue into adulthood. The pay off is in the long-term. School-community linkages where programmed into project design can have more immediate results. PFIE does not deliberately design for this.

While school programs are a natural and first target of environmental educators, in countries such as Niger where the bulk of the school age population is out of school (particularly girls in rural areas), it becomes especially important to develop programs that reach the out-of-school population. In a period of diminishing resources, the school's program is not necessarily a priority program unless it becomes a vehicle to reach out-of-school peers.

Recommendations:

1. Any national EE&C initiative should be coordinated with the PFIE program in order to ensure complementarity.
2. The PFIE could improve its output by integrating school activities into community development activities.

INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES/DONORS/PROJECTS

Agency: DANIDA - Office of Danish Cooperation in Niger

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Summary of findings:

DANIDA has been working closely with the Rural Code process in Niger and has funded two Land Tenure Commissions. In one Commission, an animator has been hired with great success. DANIDA has provided training for the thirteen members of each commission focussing on the contents of the Rural Code and on issues such as mapping.

DANIDA has also provided funding to three RIDD-FITILA Legal Clinics and for the employment of twenty para-legals under the Village Law Project. DANIDA conducted an evaluation of the project in August 1995.

Analysis:

While DANIDA is not specifically involved in IEC, it recognizes the powerful role that IEC can play in promotion and diffusion of the Rural Code. DANIDA plays an important role in the donor community's attempts to coordinate Rural Code support.

Recommendation:

Keep DANIDA informed as to IEC initiatives which involve the Rural Code.

Agency: United States Peace Corps

Contact: **Tori Paide, Volunteer**
Coordinator of Madarunfa Team
Natural Resources Management Project

Summary of findings:

Due to time constraints the consultant was unable to meet with Peace Corps staff in Niamey. The opportunity to meet with a Peace Corps volunteer did avail itself and information was gathered not only on the program itself, but also on the lives of rural Nigériens.

The U.S. Peace Corps' Natural Resource Management Project is a small community development initiative. Volunteers assist community members with crop output and provide them information on conserving their environment. Simple techniques are transferred to rehabilitate the soil, keeping in mind that villagers want to see rapid results. The program focusses on education and encourages exchanges between rural farmers. An economic incentive approach is also taken which encourages farmers to improve their land, increase production and sales and, hence, increase income.

The program has also seen the development of a small scale formal environmental education project. Three children's journals have been developed with accompanying supporting documents for teachers. Teachers involved in this initiative have shown great interest in the project with teachers from one district wanting to form an association to maintain the journals and the program on a long- term basis. The association is called "The Friends of *Bouchiya* (the name of the journal)", and Peace Corps has assigned a volunteer, a trained teacher, to build the capacity of the association and the teachers in environmental education. This initiative is supported by the Ministry of Education. One of the constraints expressed by the PCV with regards to this program is the difficulty in obtaining female teachers' participation. Experience has shown that many rural women are not comfortable in a training situation with men and will not travel for weekend seminars.

Analysis:

The U.S. Peace Corps' Natural Resource Management Program has a strong emphasis in EE&C, both in the formal and nonformal sectors. Its initiatives in working with teachers and students and in the development of a children's journal is similar to other programs initiated in other districts of Niger.

Recommendations:

1. The experience of the U.S. Peace Corps' Natural Resource Management Program should be used in the development of any national or regional EE&C initiative.

2. The Program could also be useful in the implementation of national EE&C campaign, integrating a national initiative into the PCVs' interventions at the community level.

Organization: UNICEF - Niger

Contact: Jacques Boyer, Project Officer
Information, Communication and Social Mobilization Project

Summary of Findings:

For the period 1995 - 2000, UNICEF in Niger has established an Information, Communication and Social Mobilization Project which is as yet unfunded. The project aims to involve village communities, particularly women, in the development, dissemination and evaluation of information promoting child survival, protection and development, women's rights and environmental protection. It will increase the mobilization capacity of village communities and will increase their access, particularly that of women, to modern media. It will build the national capacity in communication and education at the village level. It aims to engage political, administrative and customary officials, opinion leaders, religious leaders, artists and intellectuals in a process which attempts to resolve the problems of child survival, protection and development, discrimination of women, and environmental protection. It also guarantees a dynamic information exchange process by using appropriate and existing communication channels and the establishment of follow up communication activities.

The project will work in 4,500 villages spread out in thirteen wards. It will work with development agents intervening directly with village communities, eg. health workers, teachers, literacy agents, planners, agricultural workers, environment officials, etc. At the regional level, the project will work with technical staff from the various relevant ministries as well as journalists and communicators. At the national level, UNICEF will support the *Comité National pour la Survie, la Protection et le Développement de l'Enfant* (CNSPDE). It will also work closely with relevant Ministries, l'Association des Radio-Clubs du Niger (where 300 animators have been trained by UNICEF), the national broadcasting and press agencies, private press, youth, women's, religious, parent-teacher associations, etc. The project also aims to collaborate closely with bilateral and multilateral partners and NGOs intervening in the area of child survival, protection and development, women's rights and environmental protection.

When expanded and funded, the project will:

- develop village animation committees;
- train 750 radio-clubs animators;
- train ten journalists in communication techniques geared to rural women and children;
- train thirteen ward technical teams in communication techniques and provide each with audio-visual equipment;

- provide technical equipment to radio clubs; and
- rehabilitate community televisions,

among many other activities.

Of relevance to this assessment is the comment from Mr. Boyer that the cost of producing printed material in Niger is very high. The capacity to produce audio-visual and audio-tape material is very weak, yet moderately priced. He was unable to provide the consultant with accurate or published figures.

Recommendations:

1. Any EE&C initiative in Niger, general or specific to the Rural Code, should be developed in consultation and collaboration with the UNICEF Information, Communication and Social Mobilization Project.

Project: Agriculture Sector Development Grant
Phase II (ASDG II)

Implementing Agency: International Resources Group

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Summary of findings:

USAID's five-year (1990-1995), US\$28 million Agriculture Sector Development Grant II (ASDG II) aims to help the government of Niger improve natural resource policy and create the high level policy and institutional conditions that will support grassroots initiatives in sustainable agriculture, ultimately improving living standards for small farmers and herders.

ASDG II has two components. One is a policy component which aims to establish: 1) a coordinated national natural resources strategy; 2) secure property and resource access rights for rural agricultural producers; 3) decentralized natural resources management decision making and increased participation by local populations; 4) a shift in the role of forest agents from enforcement to extension work; and 5) an assessment of biodiversity resources at the national level.

The other is an institution strengthening component which aims to provide technical assistance, special studies, training, and monitoring and evaluation to the government to help: 1) coordinate rural development activities through improved information and financial management systems; and 2) strengthen the participation of NGOs and other institutions representing rural constituencies.

One of the programs supported by ASDG II is the Rural Code Permanent Secretariat (RCPS). The RCPS has established Land Tenure Commissions in selected outlying *arrondissements* to test the application of Rural Code principles. In the next few years, the experiences gained through this pilot effort will aid in refining and adapting the principles to conditions within other *arrondissements* and solving local differences in land tenure. As part of the popularization efforts of the Rural Code, ASDG II provided funding in mid-1994 for a series of workshops to familiarize commission members with the Code principles. It also helped organize a four-day workshop to review the impacts of the Code to date and lay out the next steps in its implementation. Working with the University of Wisconsin's Land Tenure Center and other donors, ASDG II is helping the Secretariat develop a second phase of training for pilot commission members, to document its role in the Code process and to learn conflict resolution techniques.

In support of its desire to increase local natural resources management capacities, ASDG II is also promoting the ability of the fledgling NGO community to work with rural people. The project's grant management unit considers proposals that can contribute to environmental and social sustainability, equity of access for applicants, particularly women's associations, a strong potential to impact resource management practices, and other issues.

ASDG II has worked closely with and provides assistance to the *Cellule/Gestion des Ressources Naturelles* (C/GRN), a unit established to coordinate natural resource management policy and projects. Among its many responsibilities, the C/GRN is responsible for developing and coordinating the implementation of a national program in natural resources management. This program includes activities implemented by decentralized structures, at the local level and with grassroots communities in order to allow the C/GRN to feed information from the grassroots up to a political and strategic level. This will contribute to building the capacity of rural communities to manage natural resources through technical and financial support. The C/GRN has responsibilities for training adapted to the various targeted groups involved in NRM. It also has responsibilities in the area of communications which requires it to coordinate appropriate networks as well research, record and disseminate all information relating to NRM in order to assist partners, both governmental and external, in developing activities. In light of this, a local communications and cooperation specialist will be hired by the C/GRN in early 1996.

Analysis:

ASDG II is responsible for shifting the role of forest agents, located in ward centers throughout the country, from enforcement to extension work. Graduates in Rural Development, the forest agents have recently received training in PRA methods through the FAO and are well suited to participate in EE&C interpersonal initiatives, generally and specific to the Rural Code.

The C/GRN is responsible for coordinating national natural resource management initiatives and is well suited as a center for a needed clearinghouse, managing all information, documentation and research produced in NRM. As a representative of the national NRM coordinating body, the communications and cooperation specialist, to be appointed in early 1996, will be in a position to

provide assistance in the development of any national EE&C initiative, general or specific to the Rural Code.

Recommendations:

1. The national network of forest agents should be involved in the implementation of any national or regional EE&C initiative, general or specific to the Rural Code. The agents' capacity to implement EE&C should be built as they are actively involved with rural communities and education. Technical assistance would assist the C/GRN in this initiative.
2. The forest agents' training in PRA methods techniques could be used to feed information from the grassroots to the national level and assist in the development of an EE&C campaign, general or specific to the Rural Code.
3. The C/GRN should develop and house a national NRM clearinghouse, in order to coordinate, manage and disseminate all pertinent information, documentation and research produced on NRM in Niger and in the region. Technical assistance would assist in this process.
4. Technical assistance for the communication specialist will be required.

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS - RESULTS PACKAGE THREE TEAM MEETING

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DECEMBER 1, 1995

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Jean-Pierre Magnan	Permanent Secretariat for the Rural Code
David Miller	USAID Niger
Hadiza Djibo	USAID Niger
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